

CHANCELLOR'S COMMENTS:

From UAS Chancellor Rick Caulfield



February 9, 2016

Dear UAS faculty and staff:

University of Alaska President Jim Johnsen has just released a **Strategic Pathways** draft document that will guide development of our university system, including UAS, in coming years. The UA Board of Regents endorsed the direction of this Pathways document at its recent retreat in January. A copy of the Strategic Pathways draft document can be found at <http://www.alaska.edu/pathways/>. I strongly encourage you to review it.

The draft envisions a significant restructuring of our university system, responding in part to the serious budget challenges we face. This conceptual framework includes identification of key focus areas for UAS, UAA, and UAF in research, teaching, and outreach. The framework will likely include identification of lead universities in some academic and research areas. The roles and responsibilities of a lead university will need further discussion, and could vary for different focus areas.

The core principles of the Strategic Pathways document are: Focus, Access, Diversity, Excellence, and Consistency. The document envisions much greater alignment and collaboration between our three separately-accredited universities than we've experienced in the past.

For UAS, the draft highlights our role as a liberal arts and science university, with notable teaching responsibilities in marine biology, fisheries, management, education, marine trades, mine training, interdisciplinary degrees, and degree completion options. What lead role UAS might have in any area is yet to be determined. The draft notes UAS strengths in interdisciplinary environmental research. The draft also identifies courses and program offerings expected to be available at all UA universities, including common general education requirements, distance education options, career and technical education, Alaska Native studies, developmental education, and articulation with the K-12 public education system (e.g. dual enrollment).

You have an important opportunity to review and comment on this draft document. President Johnsen welcomes feedback either through email (ua-pathways@alaska.edu) or through the response form located on the UA System Governance page: www.alaska.edu/governance/. As Chancellor, I also welcome your feedback which you can send directly to me at racaulfield@uas.alaska.edu.

The UA Board of Regents will be reviewing this draft at its upcoming meeting on February 18-19 in Fairbanks and in subsequent meetings this spring. Implementation of an approved pathways plan would likely take place over several years.

I strongly encourage you to review this document and to offer your perspectives about it, either as an individual and/or through UAS governance groups. As further information is available about the Strategic Pathways discussion, we'll share that with you as soon as possible. Thank you for your continuing good work here at UAS in support of our students and our communities!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Rick Caulfield". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chancellor Rick Caulfield